

Analytical Solutions

for BioTechnology

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Residual Solvents in Medical Devices

Discussion

Levels of residual solvent concentrations in medical devices such as polymer coatings on stents are restricted by the FDA. Dynamic headspace Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS) is an extremely useful way to measure residual solvents because it requires no liquid extraction or other preparation. The technique also has very good sensitivity and repeatability. Together, these features make GC/MS the preferred method to measure residual solvents.

Dynamic headspace works by subjecting the sample to elevated temperatures for a period of time, driving volatile compounds from the sample matrix into the atmosphere above the sample. The outgassed volatiles are collected on a cooled trap and then separated into individual components in the GC. Components eluted from the GC column are identified in the

mass spectrometer. The concentrations of the residual solvents are determined using known weight samples and calibration curves prepared using the pure solvents.

The following figures and spectra give an example of the use of GC/MS to measure residual solvents. Figure 1 shows that residual methyl-pyrrolidone (NMP) was detected with a peak retention time of 12.41. Dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) was also possibly present in the sample but no peak indicating residual DMSO was detected. Figure 2 shows extracted ion chromatograms of major fragments of DMSO ($m/z=63$ and 78). DMSO was detected with a much better sensitivity.

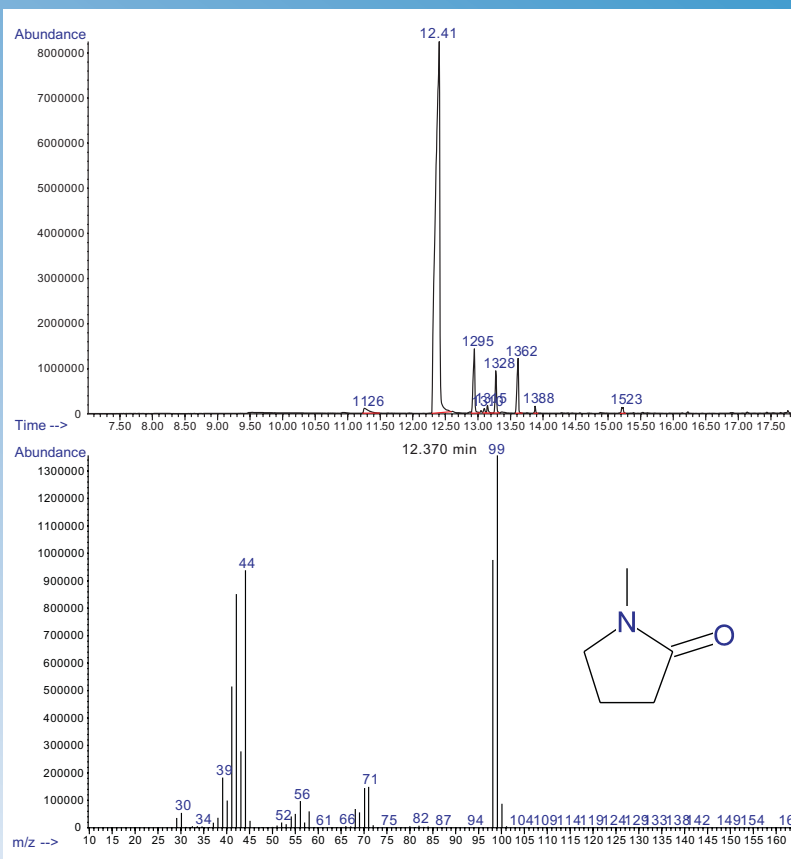


Figure 1

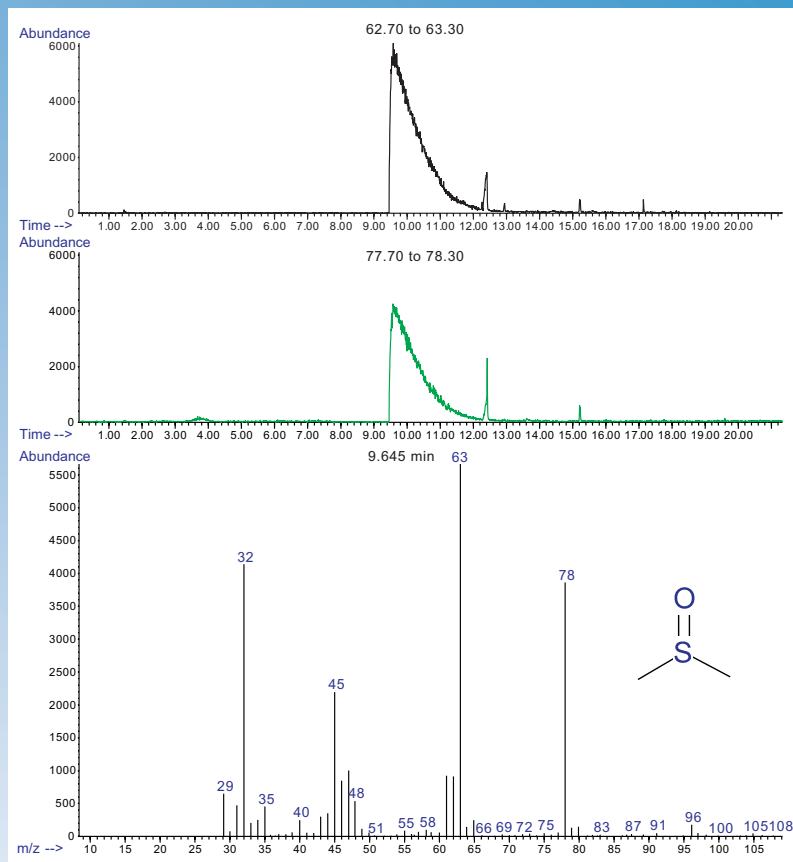
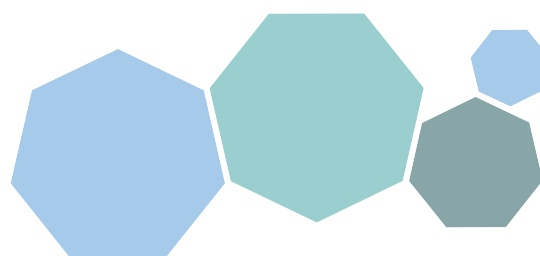


Figure 2



United States Locations

Tempe, Arizona
+1 480 239 0602 info.az@eaglabs.com
+1 602 470 2655 fax

Sunnyvale, California
810 Kifer Road
+1 408 530 3500 info.ca@eaglabs.com
+1 408 530 3501 fax

1135 E Arques Avenue
+1 408 738 3033
+1 408 530 3035 fax

785 Lucerne Drive
+1 408 737 3892
+1 408 737 3916 fax

Peabody, Massachusetts
+1 978 278 9500 info.ma@eaglabs.com
+1 978 278 9501 fax

Chanhassen, Minnesota
+1 952 828 6411 info.mn@eaglabs.com
+1 952 828 6449 fax

East Windsor, New Jersey
+1 609 371 4800 info.nj@eaglabs.com
+1 609 371 5666 fax

Syracuse, New York
+1 315 431 9900 info.ny@eaglabs.com
+1 315 431 9800 fax

Raleigh, North Carolina
+1 919 829 7041 info.nc@eaglabs.com
+1 919 829 5518 fax

Round Rock, Texas
+1 512 671 9500 info.tx@eaglabs.com
+1 512 671 9501 fax

International Locations

Shanghai, China
+ 86 21 6879 6088 info.cn@eaglabs.com
+ 86 21 6879 9086 fax

Tournefeuille, France
+ 33 5 61 73 15 29 info.fr@eaglabs.com
+ 33 5 61 73 15 67 fax

Frankfurt, Germany
+ 49 (0) 693053213 info.de@eaglabs.com
+ 49 (0) 69307941 fax

Tokyo, Japan
+ 81 3 5396 0531 info.jp@eaglabs.com
+ 81 3 5396 1930 fax

HsinChu, Taiwan
+ 886 3 5632303 info.tw@eaglabs.com
+ 886 3 5632306 fax

Uxbridge, United Kingdom
+ 44 (0) 1895 811194 info.uk@eaglabs.com
+ 44 (0) 1895 810350 fax